

THE SWORD OF THE LORD

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

EDITED BY JOHN R. RICE

Office 512 West Franklin Street, Wheaton, Illinois

An Independent Religious Weekly, Standing for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the Deity of Christ, His Blood Atonement, Salvation by Faith, New Testament Soul Winning and the Premillennial Return of Christ. Opposes Sin, Modernism, and Denominational Overlordship

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Looking Over The Editor's Shoulder

Excerpts From the Daily Mail

Mail time is thrill time with the editor. The burden of mail is heavy. There are Bible questions to answer, there are requests for prayer about loved ones unsaved, and about health and home and business problems, requests for help of various kinds. There are invitations to conduct revival services and Bible conferences. A woman from Arkansas wants women's shoes, size five, and men's shoes, size eight. A beloved and great preacher wants a sermon for a book he is compiling (an honor greatly appreciated; it will be written soon). A young preacher from Indiana wants help to find a church and so does an older one from Wisconsin. Then there are subscriptions, book orders, sweet comments and thanksgiving for blessings received in reading *The Sword of the Lord* and books and booklets by the editor. There are book orders. Many say they pray for the editor, even daily, which so greatly comforts and encourages us.

As far as possible the workers in Wheaton attend to the mail, fill orders, record subscriptions, answer questions, etc. But much of it must be attended to by the editor. This little portable Royal typewriter, given by a beloved brother, rattles away on much of it. Two fingers do the work, but not as slowly as you might think. Then I have with me my Ediphone dictating machine. On letters where time is permitted, I mark the letters "No. 1," etc., then dictate the answers on cylinders and mail them to Wheaton, when I am away. There on the transcribing machine the stenographers listen and type at the same time. I can talk faster than I can write. Thus, when I can, I dictate articles also for *The Sword*. At home it is easier to arrange the details but the same work must be done, along with copy prepared each week for *The Sword of the Lord*. Each day from Wheaton comes

mail that I must see and answer, with a digest and report on other mail that can be attended to without me.

Would you like to look over my mail with me? Look over my shoulder, then, as I read. First comes one today from Bloomingdale, Michigan:

"Dear John—Well, why not?

I am old enough to be your mother and love you so. Having no sons of my own, I say, 'Woman, behold thy son.' Yes, I am a widow seventy years old. Crippled everywhere but in my head and heart. I listen to the noon-day services from WJJD; always feel an upsurging of joy when they say we will be having Dr. John Rice. I know from the sound of the voices making the announcement that you are deeply loved.

"Mr. Sheriff sent me your book on 'The World War and the Bible.' As I told you, I am crippled with rheumatism so my active work for God must be from some other source than going out to tell the glad tidings. I was reading that marvelous book until nearly four o'clock this morning.

"I am writing to thank you for the glorious messages and the clear interpretation. Things I never could understand were made so crystal clear that one would have to be dull indeed who could not understand."

How dear to my heart that is! If my writing can bless and help a dear seventy-year-old saint so that she reads until nearly four in the morning, how gladly I should labor, knowing that my labor is not in vain in the Lord. I lost my mother when I was five, forty years ago, but I have never ceased to miss her and to need a mother's prayers, a mother's love and kindness. But the dear Saviour promised, and has made it true, that "There is no man that has left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions" (Mark 10:29, 30).

The next one is from a man at Somonoc, Illinois. It is brief but blessed.

"Dear Mr. Rice:

"Will you please send me a dozen of your religious pamphlets? I would like to send them out with my Christmas cards. And oblige yours very truly. (Signed, of course, but we do not give the name. Then a postscript follows.)

"May I ask your prayers in my behalf? After reading one of your tracts I went to a revival and was reclaimed. I hope the Lord will bless your good work."

Well, dear brother, I will write and give away more sermons, and I know, from such a report every few days, that God gives the increase when we sow beside all waters. May God bless and strengthen this brother.

From Delano, California, a sister writes, having a change of address for a friend, and about her she says:

"Mrs. McC— (We will not give the name without permission) was saved after reading 'What Must I Do To Be Saved' (CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR)

GLAD CHRISTMAS TIDINGS

BY JOHN R. RICE



"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

"9. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

"10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

"11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

"12. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

"13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

— Luke 2:8-14.

Christmas time! How much there is to rejoice our hearts at the holiday season!

I will be with my family this Christmas; most of the year I have been away from home. I will be with my dear wife, who has walked by my side these nineteen years. For twenty-four years, ever since I met her, I have never wanted to be away from her at Christmas time. I will be with little Sarah Joy, three, whose tinted picture is before me as I write, who is "daddy's gerril," she says. Grace, eighteen, will be home from Moody Bible Institute, and with Mary Lloys, fifteen, and with Elizabeth,

thirteen, will sing trios every day! Bible questions, basketball, skating, violin, Latin and our visit to Texas will be discussed. Jessie Ruth, eleven, arch and winsome, and Joanna, nine, quiet, talented, and loyal, will be at my side, drawing pictures, showing me presents, asking a thousand questions every day. I say, I will be with my family at Christmas, praise the Lord! But I know better tidings than that!

I will see my brothers and sisters, some of them for the first time in several years. Jesse, ten years older, my dear half-brother at Burkburnett, Texas. Fannie, his wife, whom he married when she was fifteen. She kissed me when she came to see us and I have loved her ever since! Gertrude (Mrs. R. C. Nutting), at Nocona, Texas, just older than I; what earnest competition, what fights and arguments, yet how we have stood for each other and loved one another these years! And of course Rufus, her husband, and all of her children. Ruth (Mrs. M. Martin), of Anarene, Texas, just younger than I; how good it will be to eat dinner with her and her dear husband and fine upstanding boys and girls. And my dear Brother George, with his wife, Peggy. George is principal of a high school at Crystal City, Texas. With the children, they will meet us in north Texas. And I will see my younger brothers, Joe and Bill, (students in Moody Bible Institute), with their families, I trust. I hope I may see "Jimmie," my older half-sister, which I have not seen for many, many years.

God willing, I will see long-loved friends and dear ones in Dallas and elsewhere. How blessed will be the Christmas season!

But I know better news than this!

The best news about Christmas is the tidings brought by the angels to the shepherds in Judaea, and written for all the world. "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Dear reader, I beg you this Christmas season, not to be absorbed in things of the world. Thank God for presents, thank God for Christmas cards, thank God for the holiday season, good things to eat, leisure and visiting loved ones. But above everything else, let us remember to praise the Lord with overflowing hearts for the message of Christmas; that Jesus, a Saviour, came into the world to save us!

Let us consider the Scripture given here and teach our hearts to rejoice at the Christmas tidings.

I. Tidings of Joy

"Fear not," said the angel, "for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." Christmas tidings are happy tidings.

How hard it is for us to believe that God means good for us! In the garden of Eden, when Adam sinned, he ran and hid himself from God, who longed to walk with him and have communion with him. God called to Adam, "Where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9). Sin made Adam afraid. Sin has made every human being since Adam afraid of God. When Jesus talked to Nicodemus about the new birth and gave that blessed verse in John 3:16, then it was necessary for him to assure us unbelieving sinners that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17).

The angels have good news for us, if we would only believe it! This angel said to the startled shepherds who were so afraid, "Fear not!" The angel had said the same thing to Zacharias, when he met with him to announce the coming birth of John the Baptist, the fore-runner of Jesus, "Fear not, Zacharias" (Luke 1:13). When the angel came to Mary to announce to her the conception of the Saviour, he must say, "Fear not," since "she was troubled at his saying." "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God!" (Luke 1:30). When the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream to encourage him to take Mary to his house, he said, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not!" (Matt. 1:20). Oh, we need not be afraid! We are failures, we are sinners, we are strangers from God, we are fallen and ruined and tainted—but God loves us, God wishes us well, God has given His Son for us! Oh, at this Christmas season, I beg you do not be afraid but be happy! God has good news for us.

How strange that the angels appeared to so many about the time

(CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO)

Is Repentance Still Necessary To Salvation?

It is startling to discover, in view of the clear teaching of the Scriptures, that some would-be Bible teachers are teaching that repentance was for the Jews and that these days people are saved by faith without repentance.

I. Saved By Faith In All Ages

In the first place, it is foolish to believe that God has one plan of salvation for one age and another plan for another age, or that He has different plans for Jews and Gentiles. It is a clear teaching of the Bible from one end to the other that God has always saved sinners in the same way; that is, by faith in the merit of Christ's atoning blood. That is, ~~repentance~~ ^{faith}—ample, in Romans, chapter 4, Abraham is held up for an example in the plan of salvation, both for Jews and Gentiles. Romans 4:3 says: "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Abraham was saved by faith.

In the same chapter, Abraham, who lived before the law, is mentioned as being saved by faith. Then in verses five to eight David is quoted, living under the law, as an example and teacher of salvation by the same faith. And in verses eleven and twelve the un-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR)

WHEN DOES THE GREAT TRIBULATION BEGIN?

BY THE EDITOR

A famous preacher is quoted as recently saying that perhaps now we are in the great tribulation time foretold in the Bible. A Bible Institute student asks if we are now in the great tribulation. The answer is, how can we tell?

The answer is that we are not now in the great tribulation. The great tribulation time is, as we understand the Scriptures to teach, a period of three and one-half years, the last half of the seventieth week foretold by Daniel the prophet for the Jewish people. Daniel 9:27 says:

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

The he in the above verse refers to a certain quotation, "prince that shall come," who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple. He is the "man of sin," the "son of perdition" mentioned in II Thessalonians 2:3, "that wicked" of II Thessalonians 2:8. He is "the" (CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR)

Five Conversions at Ada, Okla., After Reading Heaven Book

The following letter was a great blessing to us, and I am sure it will be a blessing to you:

"Ada, Oklahoma
December 1, 1940

"Dear Brother Rice:

"We are enclosing \$5.00 for 25 copies of 'Bible Facts About Heaven,' and \$1.00 for packing and mailing.

"We have just finished distributing 25 in unsaved homes. Five people have recently been saved just after reading this book and told

us that it had helped them to be saved and cleared up Scripture that had been confusing them all their life.

We want you to know this because handing the books out was a very small task, but it took much effort and prayer to write such a wonderful message.

"We are thankful for you, Brother Rice, and regard you very highly because we feel that you keep in close contact with God.

"Yours in Christ,
(Signed) "Mr. and Mrs. W. G. K."

GLAD CHRISTMAS TIDINGS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

of the Saviour's birth. They appeared to Zacharias, to Mary, to Joseph (three times), to the shepherds in the fields; the angel may have appeared to the wise men from the east for "being warned of God in a dream," they returned another way. When the message to the shepherds was done, "there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host." It seemed that the angels were so eager to appear to men, that they could hardly refrain from shouting the chorus, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" The news was so good that even heaven could not contain it. The tidings were such glad tidings that angels were beside themselves with the joy of telling it! It is happy news we have.

We poor, conceited, self-satisfied, wise-in-our-own-sight mortals know entirely too much these days to believe in angels. We never see them, never hear them, though the Scripture says that they are all about us, loving servants and ministers of us who will be the heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14). They are our guardians, our messengers. But we choose to walk by physical sight instead of spiritual sight. We take seriously only the things that are seen, not the unseen, and only the things that are temporary instead of the eternal. It would be blessed beyond expression this Christmas time if Christians would open their hearts, not so much to the things understood by the head, as to the joyful message of the angels received in the heart. There are about us loving angels of God who would gladly make us happy in our heart if they could. The angels of God brought glad, glad tidings for all the world.

If there should come the glad news—today that the wars in Europe, Asia, and Africa were settled, were settled amicably and righteously, it would be blessed news, but not a thousandth part as good as the news we have here.

If all the hungry had bread, if all the naked had clothes, if all the sick were made well, if all the unemployed were given jobs, that would not be a fraction as great as the news spoken by the angels that a Saviour, Christ the Lord, was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

If every home had a Christmas basket, if every stocking were filled with goodies, if every mother had her children at home for Christmas, that would not be good news like the tidings brought by the angels.

How silly we are to turn at Christmas time to legends and fairy tales. In Churches of Jesus Christ there are foolish and sinning preachers and Sunday school teachers and children's workers who tell stories of Santa Claus, reindeer, or airplanes when they could tell of a baby born in a manger, of the angels' praises saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men;" of the wise men from the East who brought their gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, seeing again the star which stopped over the manger in Bethlehem, as it had appeared to them in the East.

It is not only that Christian workers tell a lie when they could tell the truth and teach paganism when they could teach Christianity. It seems worse that they miss the opportunity to teach the only thing that can ever bring peace and permanent joy to this world. Beloved, at Christmas time tell children not the lies of Satan, not the fairy tales of paganism, but tell them the good news which the angels told to the shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem, that "unto you is born this day a Saviour,

which is Christ the Lord."

Some Christians have a tendency to criticize civic organizations and commercial firms for using Christmas carols, Christmas pictures, and Scriptures at the holiday season. I do not criticize them for this, rather I rejoice with all my heart. I wish that Christmas were not so much commercialized, and I regret that many who sing "Silent Night, Holy Night," and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," and Philip Brooks' matchless hymn, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," do not, I fear, know Jesus Christ personally. But I am glad for the Saviour to have their homage. All those who do not personally know the Saviour were yet made by Him and kept by Him and surrounded by His boundless mercy and providence and care. David well said, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6).

I saw on billboards the other day a beautiful colored scene of the baby Jesus in the manger, and, I think, the wise men from the East. My heart glowed and burned as I saw it. I praise God that the gospel was so preached.

From the giant dome of a skyscraper in Des Moines, Iowa, I heard loud speakers ringing out so that for many, many blocks people could hear:

"Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
'Round yon virgin, mother and Child,
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in Heavenly peace!
Sleep in Heavenly peace!"

And I thought as I walked the snowy sidewalk and knew that the milling multitudes heard the testimony about Jesus, that if preachers cannot reach crowds with the story that a Saviour is born, then praise God that radios and singing clubs and civic organizations give witness that our Saviour was born!

Multiplied thousands of Christmas cards will be sent this year by people who are not Christians, and on these cards will be many a verse of Scripture, many a scene picturing the baby Jesus, or the angels speaking to the shepherds, or the Heavenly Host shouting, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." I thank God for that. I thank God that calendars remind people that the Saviour was born. I thank God for the very gladness that is in the air. These are "tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Let every person, then, who lives, be encouraged to rejoice in the Christmas season. But let our joy be in the Saviour, and not in presents, not in seeing our loved ones, not in big times, not in hung-up stockings, nor greetings. The world never heard better news than that a Saviour was born. No wonder that there was a multitude of the Heavenly host that joined in the praises that wintry night in the fields of Judea where shepherds kept their flocks!

II. Tidings For All People

The message of the angels was for everybody. Christmas joy and the Christmas message is not for any clique, any clan, any strata of society, any color, any race, any nation. It is for everybody. The angel said, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

Let us rejoice then for every Christmas card sent even by unsaved people, for every stress of the Christmas theme, even by unconverted Jews. I do not mean that any can have the best blessing of Christmas without loving Christ, trusting Christ, receiving Christ as Saviour. But I mean that it would be foolish to try to limit this blessing that God meant to be world-wide, and for every creature. This good news is as wide as the great commission which is to "all the world," to "every creature," to "all nations," and "unto the end of the world" (Mark 15:16; Matt. 28:19, 20).

It seems strange that Caesar Augustus in his palace at Rome knew nothing of the birth of the Saviour; the Heavenly angel passed him by. There was no sound of praises from the Heavenly chorus in the marble halls at Rome. But if the announcement had been made in Caesar's palace, it would have been a message for rulers, for

classes, instead of the masses. But this good news is not just for rulers, it is for all.

It seems strange that to the Sanhedrin and the religious rulers at Jerusalem the angel did not appear and give the message of the universe-shaking event that occurred that night. But this message is not just for saints; it is for the whole race of sinners. This message is not just for church people; it is for the outside throngs. Man has a tendency to fit the gospel to special groups of religious folk. Preachers put on an unctuous tone, dress in sober garments, and often wear the collar turned backwards and the robe of the priest especially to make themselves appear properly religious. Churches tend constantly toward formalism, toward an order of service that may be beautiful and æsthetic to the initiated and the religious, to those accustomed to memorized responses, to those who know when to stand and when to sit, when to pray and when to sing. But, God forgive us, we often forget the whole secular world for which Christ died. We ought to remember that the gospel was not meant for churches but for sinners. So the angel did not go to the priests and prophets and Pharisees, but he went to the shepherds.

There were men rich and powerful in commerce in those days. But the announcement of our Saviour's birth was not made to them personally by the angels. This is not a rich man's gospel, for all who come to Christ must come as the poor in spirit. This message is to all people.

The "message of great joy which shall be to all people" — that reminds us of "God so loved the world." The whole world, mind you. Every person that ever walks this planet is included in the love of God; the drunkard along with the preacher, the harlot along with the saint, the slave along with his master, the pauper along with the king!

The best "break" poor people ever get in the world, they get in the gospel. In Soviet Russia they said that "Religion is the opiate of the poor," so they set out with hammer and sickle, with blasphemy and atheism, with murder of Christians and confiscation of churches, to do away with the "enslavement" of religion. But in what state now are the poor there! Never was there such oppression, such senseless tyranny, such loss of cardinal right and liberties of mankind in recent centuries. Christ was born in a stable and laid in a manger "because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). He was wrapped in swaddling clothes, that is, coarse cloth, uncut, unsewn, unadorned. Christ was born poor. When His mother went to the temple to offer a sacrifice according to the law, she took not the lamb that was customary, but "a pair of turtledoves," which was permitted to the very poor.

At birth Christ lay in a manger. In life He had nowhere to lay His head. He died stripped of His garments and was buried in a borrowed grave!

How fitting, then, that the glad Christmas message should come to shepherds, the poor, the common, the undistinguished.

To the vilest sinner that ever lived is offered the glad news that the gospel is for him. To the poorest wretch that ever slept on straw in a hovel, or dressed in rags, or held a beggar's cup, or received crumbs at a rich man's gate, the glad tidings are offered that the Saviour is for Him. Nobody is left out.

How well is it said that "he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). No wonder it is offered, "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). This good news is for all people.

III. Tidings of A Saviour

These glad tidings to all people are tidings of a Saviour. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David A SAVIOUR." That is what makes them good tidings.

The world is not suffering for lack of a ruler, an educator, a general, a doctor, a poet, a scientist—the world needs a Saviour.

Wise men call Jesus "the great teacher," and it is true, "never man spake as this man" (John 7:46), but that is not the good news. Jesus rebuked the young man who came to Him saying, "good mas-

ter" (or rabbi, professor), and said to Him sharply, "why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God" (Matt. 13:16, 17). If Jesus is only a rabbi or teacher, then He is not good, but is the greatest cheat, the greatest disappointment this world ever saw.

He was not announced by the angels as a good teacher, but as a saviour.

There are those who try to live "the Jesus way" without accepting Jesus as a Saviour, but that way lies frustration, failure, and eternal ruin.

A young college senior said to a famous preacher, "I am willing to take Jesus as my great example, and follow in his steps. I do not think he is the Saviour, but the greatest teacher that ever lived. I will gladly take Him as my example."

The preacher then said, "Well, let us begin then where Christ began. It was said of Him, 'who did no sin' (1 Pet. 2:22). Can you follow that example?"

The young man turned pale and stammered, "No, I cannot say that I have never sinned."

"Then what you need," said the minister, "is not an example but a Saviour!"

Good examples do no good to dead men, and sinners are dead in trespasses and in sin. The good examples of the fine athletes can do no good to the helpless, hopeless cripple, the incurably diseased; and the whole world is sick with a curse and blight of sin that only Christ can heal. The world needs a Saviour! And the good news is that Jesus Christ came to be the Saviour of all who will trust Him.

That means that while we rejoice over the birth of the Baby Jesus, our blessings do not come primarily from His birth, but from His death. No one will ever rejoice properly, and from the heart, at Christmas time who does not know that the same Child who was born of a virgin died a criminal's death on the cross. "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3). Jesus was born to die. Jesus lived but to die. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Let no modernist deceive you, before the Saviour left Heaven He knew He was to die, and before He was born of the virgin's womb, it was determined in the councils of Heaven that He should live a holy life but should die a shameful death, paying for man's sins and becoming man's Saviour.

And strange as it may seem, this is all that the world holds against Jesus; that He claims to be, and is, a Saviour and Lord.

To the world it does not so much matter that He would claim to be the Son of God. The modernist glibly asserts that we are all the children of God. Every lodge, and nearly every religion speaks of "the universal fatherhood of God." An unbelieving Fosdick can say that Christ was divine just as his mother was divine. But the world is not willing to admit that it needs a Saviour. Men do not want to confess that they are undone sinners and that Christ was the only sinless One. That is why scoffers deny the virgin birth, deny His bodily resurrection, deny His pre-existent glory. Wicked men, unrepentant men, proud, haughty, self-righteous men, do not want a Saviour.

Men would be willing to have a helper. Millions are willing to pray who are not willing to trust. Millions use the name of Christ in forms and ceremonies who do not cast themselves upon Him wholly as a Saviour. How strange that people would prefer Mary, or the priests, or the saints, to the Son of God! And the reason is that men do not like to confess that they are sinners, do not like to trust to another better than they, pure, holy, sinless, Who died the innocent for the guilty, and the pure for the wicked.

You who think of the fair little One in the manger should remember that He is not simply a darling baby to be cuddled. This is the Son of God come to SAVE men! Mary, after the conception of the Saviour, praised God and said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my SAVIOUR" (Luke 1:46, 47). And she meant the God Who would become flesh, this Saviour Who is Christ the Lord, of which she was to be the mother.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE)

Bible Questions Answered

1. Lessons From the Transfiguration
2. Did Jesus Intend To Establish The Communion Service?

A brother in Chesterton, Indiana, asked two questions, which are here answered from the Scriptures.

Question 1: "What was the purpose and the lessons God intended to teach by the transfiguration?"

Answer: The meaning of the transfiguration is explained, I think, by the preceding verse in each case where the account is given in the Gospels. For instance, in Matthew 16:28, the verse preceding the account of the transfiguration, the Lord Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

Then comes chapter seventeen, and immediately the account of the transfiguration.

The transfiguration, therefore, is a picture of Christ's coming in His glory, a picture of the second coming.

A further lesson is gotten by the words which came from Heaven when God spoke and said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The disciples were greatly impressed with Moses and Elijah, representing the law and the prophets. But God wanted the disciples to know that Christ was greater than Moses, greater than Elijah, greater than the Bible, that He is verily the only begotten Son of God.

These meanings to the transfiguration are emphasized by the Apostle Peter, under Divine inspiration, in Second Peter 1:16-18, which says:

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

"And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

Peter and the other apostles saw Jesus in all the glory of His second coming, saw it ahead of time at the transfiguration; and thus what they wrote was not cunningly devised fables, when they spoke of the majesty of His appearing, and the glory of His second coming. And he also mentions the voice from Heaven which assured them that Christ was the very Son of God.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR)

"The Sword" Started Husband Tithing

From Pennsylvania comes a good letter which says:

"Dear Christian Friends:
"Enclosed find \$1.00 for a year's subscription to your paper, *The Sword of the Lord*." It is full of spiritual food, and how I wish it were possible for me to send it to several of my unsaved relatives and friends; but I will pass my copies as I receive them along to others. A friend was kind enough to loan us a few copies to read, for which I am thankful, because it helped my husband to receive light on tithing."

Then this wife tells how she left the paper with the article on tithing near her husband's chair and how the next Sunday he began to tithe. *The Sword of the Lord* was loaned to her by a friend. It so blessed her heart, and settled her husband on tithing, that now she subscribes for it.

Then she says:
"I want you to know that not all your good deeds are wasted. There are lots of people who appreciate your good work, and best of all the Lord surely does. After all, that is what counts."

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EVANGELIST JOHN R. RICE,
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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GLAD CHRISTMAS TIDINGS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO)

They miss all the blessing of Christmas who make Jesus Christ anything less than Saviour. He was not a martyr dying as a victim of His age, or dying for a principle. Jesus was not a victim of circumstances. He plainly said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17, 18). Let us remember that Jesus is not primarily a prophet or teacher or priest or king; primarily He is a Saviour, the only Saviour. It is true He is a prophet promised by Moses (Deut. 18:15). He is the "Apostle and High Priest of our profession" (Heb. 3:1). He is a master, teacher, leader, "one is your Master, even Christ" (Matt. 23:8-10). He is our example, for "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21), and "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5), and "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). But no man has any need of Jesus as anything else until first of all he knows Him as the only Saviour, his own personal saviour and Lord, the Christ of God.

Dear reader, you who sing songs and carols, you who give gifts and send greetings, you who gather around the festive board, remember you have missed all of Christmas that is worth-while if you do not know Jesus Christ as your own Saviour. The joyful tidings which shall be for all people is that the Saviour has come.

IV. Tidings of the Propheted Christ, the Messiah, the Lord of the Old Testament

The angel said to the shepherds, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD." Jesus is the human name of our Saviour, and it means Saviour or Deliverer. Jesus is the name by which Mary called Him from play. Joseph, His father, instructed the young lad in the carpenter's shop by this human name, Jesus. Doubtless he said, "Jesus, hand me the plane." His unconverted brothers called Him Jesus. And when He died, His accusation called Him 'Jesus of Nazareth.' Jesus is the name that the Son of God adopted when He came into the world to live among men.

But the angel explained to the shepherds that this Saviour (Jesus), "is Christ the Lord." The word Christ is a Greek word meaning the anointed, just as Messiah is the Hebrew word for the anointed. The angel meant to say that this is the Christ (anointed) of Psalm 2:2 (quoted Christ in Acts 4:26). This is the Son in the same second Psalm, verse 12. This is the suffering servant of Isaiah 52:13-15 and Isaiah 53. This is the forsaken one of Psalm 22. This is the Prophet foretold by Moses (Deut. 18:15). This is the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15). This is the "Messiah the prince" of Daniel 9:25. This is the Governor, born at Bethlehem, that shall rule God's people (Micah 5:2). This is the promised Seed of Abraham (Gen. 13:15; Gen. 17:7, 8; Gal. 3:16). This is the stem from the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1), the promised seed of David whose kingdom shall never end (II Sam. 7:10-16). This is the child born, the Son given, upon Whose shoulders shall be the government, "and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6).

Yes, this is that child, that Son, the Son that a virgin should conceive and call His name Immanuel (Isa. 7:14). That is what the angel meant when he said to the shepherds, "And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." They would see with their own eyes that God had come in the form of a baby, from the womb of a virgin. The Scripture was fulfilled in that it was in Bethlehem, and of the tribe of Judah, and of the house of David, and in a virgin birth.

All true joy is joy based upon solid facts. Jesus was the Saviour because He is Christ the Lord. The

word Lord here is used throughout the Scriptures referring to God Almighty the Creator. The angel's word can have but one meaning, and that is that the baby boy is God manifest in the flesh. He is the Word Who was in the beginning with God (John 1:1). By Him, God made the worlds (Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16). He is, Isaiah said, the mighty God, the everlasting Father." Later, Jesus Himself would say, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30).

This is what Peter meant when Jesus asked Him, "Whom say ye that I am?" And Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:15, 16). That baby Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. He is God's own pre-existent Son come in the flesh.

Notice that the angel said, "A Saviour which is Christ THE Lord. He is a Saviour, but really the only Saviour since He is the propheted Christ, Messiah, of the Old Testament, God's Own Son. No one else can ever be like Him. No one else can ever do the work He can do. Christ stands preeminent and alone. He was born as never another was born, lived as never another lived, spake as never a man spake, died as no one else could ever die, and now it is the will of God that everything in Heaven and earth should bow the knee to Him and that in all things He might have the preeminence.

This Christmas time let us never forget that Jesus was not simply a baby, but the only baby of His kind. He is the only baby that inherited not a taint of sin. Jesus is the Christ, the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world.

V. Tidings of a Baby!

We have just said that the Saviour born that first Christmas season (whatever the day or month), was the pre-existent Son, the Christ of God and thus the only Saviour. But let us never forget that Christ was also human.

The angel said to the shepherds, "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

How glad I am that the gospel story does not begin with the ministry of Christ or with His death. The story of Christ in the flesh begins, with Him as with every other human being, at His conception by a human mother. And from that moment until the day He died, Jesus was humanity. He was God, yes, but He was also Man. We are told to have the mind that was in Christ Jesus.

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

Here is a God willingly becoming man. Here is the Divine, purposely becoming human. Here is the mighty Creator, making Himself a creature under the curse and frailty and temptations and limitations of a human body.

Hebrews 4:15, 16, tells us:

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Man could not see God until Jesus was born. No man could ever explain the compassion of God until Jesus, the human Christ, looked upon sinners and had compassion upon them, loved them, wept over them, healed, forgave, died for them. Oh, how blessed it is that Jesus has been through every temptation, every trial that any human being ever suffered. He was tempted in all points like as we are and yet without sin. To such an High Priest I can go boldly. He knows the feeling of our infirmities. He remembers that we are dust. The serpent's tooth of temptation never does strike any poor man or woman in the world that

it did not first strike Jesus Christ. Let us consider the baby Jesus. We may well pity every baby ever born in this world. Each little one seems fresh from the hand of God. So pure and untainted by sin, they seem at first, that they might have been cuddled by angels and might have smiled into the face of God in Heaven! But a baby begins to die as soon as it is born. The first thing every little one does is to cry! The little one has to get adjusted to a life full of disease germs, full of accidents, hardships, temptations, sins and death. The little one, at first immune to many diseases, soon becomes susceptible to infection and is started on the road that will end either in premature death or in lined face, gray hair, stooped shoulders, brittle bones, a slowing down of life processes, infeeblement of mind and body and at last the grave!

But the dear Saviour ran all the gamut of human emotions, human trials, human sufferings and human temptations. From the first irritation of the straw on His tender skin or the first pricking of a diaper pin until the thorns were pressed into His brow and the nails driven through His hands and feet, our blessed Saviour took in His own body, yea, in His own soul, all the wounds and griefs and sicknesses and sorrows with which Satan ever afflicted the human race.

Our Saviour entered this world through the same portals used by every human being since Eve — the body of a human mother. He was nursed at a mother's breast, cuddled in a mother's arms. He was sung to sleep, no doubt, by a mother's lullaby, taught His first lispings words by "mamma" and took His first tottering steps to mother's outstretched arms.

Jesus knows the pathway of mankind from cradle to the grave, the bumps of childhood, the strange thrills and stirrings and gropings of adolescence, the hot passions of youth, the burdens of maturity — these all attacked Jesus the same as they have attacked every other baby boy who grew to manhood. Jesus never sinned. He never fell before Satan's onslaught. He never wavered before temptation, but "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin."

I do not know how Jesus could be tempted but the Scripture says He was. We may reverently believe, from the Scriptures, that Jesus resisted the same biological urges that press every young man. We must take it for granted since the Scripture says He was tempted in all points, that Satan often whispered to Him that He should taste the pleasures of sin. Jesus conquered every temptation that ever beset men, whether the lure of lust or the taste of wine or the desire for power or the deceitfulness of riches or the self-exaltation of fame.

Let never a sinner feel that He is beyond redemption for Christ Jesus has blunted every arrow of Satan, has been exposed to every device of the wicked one.

Are you poor, dear reader? Jesus was poorer. Do you know the pangs of hunger? He went for forty days and forty nights without food and then met Satan in his major temptations. Have friends forsaken you? Then remember that Jesus was betrayed by Judas, His companion and friend, for thirty pieces of silver. Do people scorn your best efforts to do right and to help them? Then remember that they mocked Jesus while He died and gave Him vinegar and gall when He was thirsty and dared Him to come down from the cross when only His death could open the door of salvation to them and sinners of all the races.

I am glad the Saviour, born in Bethlehem, was once a baby. I am glad He was once a boy. I am glad He was once a Man!

The Saviour was so human that shepherds could pull back the swaddling clothes to see the baby's face in the straw. The Saviour was so human that He could take little children in His arms and bless them and they, we are sure, were not afraid. The Saviour had tears like other men. He hungered and thirsted as other men. He was tired, He rejoiced, He slept, He bled, He died! Thank God for a human Saviour who was Son of Man as well as Son of God.

Conclusion

Loving friends will give you many Christmas presents this year, and I am glad they will.

Drunkenness, Alcoholic Deaths, Drunk Drivers Increase Constantly Under Repeal

W. C. T. U. Makes Public Remarkable Summary of Seven Years of Repeal

The United Press has recently released a report given by the W. C. T. U. at Chicago, showing the deadly increase of drunkenness, in deaths from alcoholism, in arrests for drunken driving, during the seven years since prohibition was repealed. The repeal of prohibition was a mistake, engineered by wicked and mistaken people for generally bad reasons. Distillers and brewers put in millions of dollars to spread false propaganda, rich men helped, hoping the tax on beer paid by poor people would lighten their income taxes, politicians like Roosevelt and Farley joined in to get the votes of drinkers for the Democratic party, and the money of liquor and beer makers for the Democratic campaign fund. Other misguided people, distressed by the violation of liquor laws, thought it would be better to do away with the law, that then there would be less crime and less bootlegging. But events now prove they were mistaken, misled by propaganda of depraved liquor forces. Bootlegging is as great as ever, best authorities say, and the following figures show that more liquor and beer is now being used, more harm done, than during prohibition days, and that the drinking and deadly results of drinking are rapidly increasing.

Note what the United Press report makes little of, that milk drinking and drinking of fruit juices during prohibition days greatly increased, and has not been equalled since repeal. Better industries have lost customers when people drink liquor and beer instead.

Here is the W. C. T. U. report of seven years of repeal.

W. C. T. U. TOTALS DRINKING BILL

'21 Billions in Liquor Since Repeal'
CHICAGO, ILL. — (UP). — The Women's Christian Temperance

Love must give and men are never more like God than when they give. Our human love is selfish love and our gifts are given with mixed motives and yet let us, the best we can, give. But I beg you in Jesus' name, do not let your Christmas joy depend on other presents. The radio, the ring, the car, the new furniture or furs or watch or ice box or toaster or candy or ties or socks or slippers or robe — these gifts are incidental. They cannot bring more than temporary and limited joy. But the best gift anybody ever gave is that God gave His Son. Christ is the best Christmas present. This Christmas Season, I beg you, to take God's only Son as your Saviour, and enter into the tidings of joy as announced by the angel, for all people. Are you glad that God loves you? Are you conscious that He has been good to you, that He gives and gives and gives? Do you believe that Christ died for you? Then I beg you this Christmas season, open your heart, repent of your sins, trust Jesus Christ to come in and forgive and save you.

If you will trust the Saviour today, how glad I would be to hear from you. You might write me something similar to the following letter:

Evangelist John R. Rice
512 W. Franklin Street
Wheaton, Illinois
Dear Brother Rice:

In the solemn joy of the Christmas season I thank God for His great gift of a Saviour, Christ the Lord. I acknowledge myself a sinner and I open my heart today to receive Jesus. I trust Him to be my Saviour, to forgive my sins, to give me everlasting life and a home in Heaven. I claim Him as my great Christmas gift today and forever, and I mean this as a sincere profession of my faith in Him as the Saviour of my soul, the Forgiver of my sins and my Lord.

Sincerely yours,

Name _____
Address _____

Union Wednesday totaled its score sheet on the nation's drinking bill since repeal of prohibition seven years ago.

It announced with concern that imbibers have consumed some 40 million "shots" of various liquors at a cost of \$21,503,048,000.

This, the W. C. T. U. said, was at the expense of food, clothing, housing and attendance at movies. The union issued its warning on the eve of repeal's seventh anniversary.

A breakdown of the score sheet revealed that drinkers did away with some 9,565,920 barrels of 100-proof alcohol, 270,000,000 barrels of beer and 450 million gallons of wine.

Other contentions in W. C. T. U. tally:

1. Arrests for drunkenness have nearly doubled. Specifically, the W. C. T. U. said, the ratio of such arrests per 100,000 population increased 82.1 per cent in 1939 over 1932.
2. Deaths attributed to alcoholism are 41 per cent higher than during the first seven years of prohibition.
3. The ratio per 100,000 population of arrests for driving while intoxicated increased 61.3 per cent in 1939 over 1932, while the annual average of traffic deaths increased 80 per cent during the repeal period over the first seven years of prohibition.
4. The number of the nation's liquor retailers had grown to 420,000 by July 1, 1940.
5. "The liquor trade has spent nearly 300 million dollars in advertising, propaganda and sales appeal, aimed principally at making customers out of millions of former non-drinking youth and women."
6. Makers of distilled spirits have sold \$5,106,296,342 worth of merchandise; the beer dealers three times that amount, or \$14,882,048,342; and the producers of wine of 14 to 21 per cent alcoholic content, \$1,605,000,000.

The W. C. T. U. said liquor manufacturers had collected a gross total of \$21,503,048,000 from customers "while thousands of industries serving the people with food, clothing and necessary products have lost a large part of this trade total."

As national gains, subsequently unmatched in the repeal period, the W. C. T. U. pointed to a 212-pound per capita increase in milk consumption and a new billion-dollar industry, resulting from increased sales of fruit and vegetable juices and other ingredients of non-alcoholic beverages, during prohibition.

Editor's Engagements

A reader writes, as many others have before, requesting that the editor's engagements be published so it will be convenient to pray intelligently about the work. Thus we give schedule, God willing, for three months.

December 15, close at Des Moines Gospel Temple.

December 17-22, Campus Bible Church, Ames, Iowa.

December 23-30, trip to Texas; see loved ones and friends.

December 31, watch night service at First Baptist Church, Geneva, Illinois.

December 31 - January 17, Elgin Bible Church, Elgin, Illinois.

January 19 - February 16, Grand Island, Nebraska, with Rev. Theo. Epp, daily radio services (more than one station), evening revival services.

February 17 - March 2, Wheaton Bible Church, Wheaton, Illinois.

March 9-16, Evansville Rescue Mission, Evansville, Indiana.

March 18-30, Morning Cheer Broadcast and revival services with Rev. George A. Palmer, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

SWORD COMMENTS

"The Sword has been a great blessing to me and my wife. We think it is the most wonderful paper printed. We have learned more from it than from all the preaching we have ever heard. We pray for you that God will bless you and keep you, that you may continue to be a blessing to others as you have been to us. We depend a lot on you and your paper."

Mr. H. R. B.
Shickshinny, Pa.

Looking Over the Editor's Shoulder

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

which I gave her while in a hospital." Isn't that blessed? And from Peoria, Illinois, came a decision slip from the same booklet, "What Must I Do To Be Saved?" And this rejoiced my heart; it is the first one showing someone saved from the new printing with brown ink, on enameled, tinted paper, with a picture on the cover, twenty-four pages instead of sixteen. While God is helping us wonderfully to pay that \$350.00 for the lovely new edition of many thousand copies, one soul has already been saved worth far more than the cost of them all. And I expect to hear of scores, perhaps hundreds more, saved through this printing of the sermon so greatly blessed of God.

Here is another happy letter from Davenport, Iowa. After sending some trial subscriptions, and ordering five copies of the book, "Bible Facts About Heaven," a dear sister says:

"I received one book just in time to give to a young woman going through a great sorrow and the book went to Seattle, Washington. Have been anxious to get more for our own home, and to give to others. I have received much good from trial subscriptions to *The Sword of the Lord* and sent a subscription to my parents who have been Christian Scientists for nearly 30 years, for whom I have prayed and had prayer requested at WMBI. I also asked you about immersion baptism and you sent me your book, "Bible Baptism," and now my father, mother and I are going to be baptized December eighth in to a Baptist church. My husband and son are still in Lutheran church, but I am earnestly praying that they will join us, and I know our Lord is faithful. May God bless you richly in the wonderful work you are doing. Do not mention my name with these trial subscriptions. Three of these homes are in Christian Science for which I am praying for their release.

"My parents are 68 and 75 years old. I have prayed in secret for several years for their release from this evil bondage. One sister and one brother and their households I also keep in prayer and I am expecting God's mercy for them. Please remember me in your prayer as I have prayed too for you and your work, to the Lord's honor and glory." Think of that! Trial subscription to *The Sword of the Lord* was sent to these parents, 68 and 75 years old. They were enslaved in Christian Science, which denies practically all the essentials of the Christian faith. But after prayer they were converted. Then this sister asked me about whether she should be immersed, and I gave her the 60-page booklet on "Bible Baptism." Now daughter, mother and father are to be baptized in a Baptist church publicly professing their faith in Christ as He commanded us to do. May God answer this sister's prayers, and bless the other books she gives out, in souls saved and hearts comforted. From Chicago comes the following letter:

"Dear brother: "We gave one of your books, 'World-Wide War and the Bible' to our family doctor. He claims to be an agnostic, yet this book seems to open his eyes, and he is asking for another which he wishes to buy. He is seventy-two years old.

The writer says in her family they have daily prayer for this unsaved doctor. Will you join in that earnest prayer, as I do? I wish space allowed us to print the rest of this lovely letter.

And this is none of your business, dear reader, but if you are still looking over my shoulder you may read part of a letter from my daughter, Grace, 18, in Moody Bible Institute, Chicago. She says:

"I'm thankful tonight, and so happy. The two verses I think are the most jubilant and victorious—the ones that can put me on the mountain top—are those you quoted in

When Does Great Tribulation Begin?

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

beast" of Revelation, chapter 13, and following. He is, I think, properly called the "antichrist." Daniel's seventieth week of Jewish national history will be marked by the treaty or covenant which this wicked dictator will make with the remnant of Jews in Palestine.

But this dictator, or "man of sin," cannot be made known until after the Lord Jesus comes into the air to catch away His saints. Second Thessalonians 2:7 tells us plainly he who now hinders or restrains the "man of sin" so that he cannot appear will be taken out of the way before the "man of sin" can be revealed. This restraining One is the Holy Spirit who dwells in the bodies of believers. He will never be taken away until the rapture of the saints in whose bodies He dwells.

It is clear, then, that the Antichrist, the beast, cannot be revealed until after the rapture of the saints. Then he will make his covenant with the Jews in Palestine and Daniel's seventieth week of Jewish national history will begin.

But the great tribulation, proper, cannot begin until the middle of that week of seventy years, when the "man of sin" will enter into a temple at Jerusalem, claiming to be God (II Thess. 2:4), committing the "abomination of desolation," mentioned in Daniel 9:27.

In Matthew 24 Jesus tells plainly that this "abomination of desolation" begins the great tribulation. Read verses 15-21 which say:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand):

"16. Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: "17. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house:

"18. Neither let him which

the Tribulation article, First Thessalonians 4:16, 17. Verse 16 is all the build-up and excitement before the climax, then the peak is 'then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,' and then it is just perfect peace—'and so shall we ever be with the Lord!'

So it is. Have you meditated and rejoiced in the sweetness of these verses? How sweet that our children discover the same riches we rejoice in in the Word of God!

Mrs. Rice writes (this has gotten into the family mail now, hasn't it?) that there is trouble keeping enough of my books from the printers. Sam Morris, of *The Voice of Temperance* Broadcast ordered by wire another thousand copies of "Bible Facts About Heaven" (three thousand in all). I have instructed the printer to start the fourth printing. (The first 5,000 was printed in September), which will make 20,000 copies printed. They will be ready by the time the others are gone. But Mrs. Rice says:

"Christmas orders for your books pour in. I have personally filled many of the orders the last few days since Viola has been sick and it is a sight about how they want John R. Rice's books. That fellow must be good. 'War' is running a good race now."

Well, I'll put that away and read the rest of it when not so many are looking over my shoulder! (Please, let no one tell her any different. "That fellow" isn't good, but I like her to think so.)

But if you saw all the mail, you would see that I was forty-five years old on December 11, and that I got cards, telegrams, gloves, hose, handkerchiefs, nail clippers, key ring, two boxes of candy, one of candied fruit, and an auto radio!

New we hope you will rejoice with our blessings and opportunities, and pray with us over our burdens and tasks, that Jesus Christ may be praised and loved and trusted and sinful hearts be cleansed by His blood and made happy by His grace!

Is Repentance Still Necessary To Salvation?

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

circumcised Gentiles are promised salvation after the same example of Abraham under grace.

When Peter preached to Cornelius, a Gentile, he gave him the

is in the field return back to take his clothes.

"19. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

"20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

"21. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

This great tribulation begins, then, at the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the prophet.

That means that the great tribulation time will be the last half of the seven years, Daniel's seventieth week, that period of time which intervenes between the rapture of the saints and Christ's return in glory with saints and angels to destroy the kingdom of the "man of sin," fight the battle of Armageddon, and to sit on David's throne. The great tribulation is the last half of the seven years which saints will spend in heaven on our honeymoon with Christ.

That tribulation time is mentioned in Daniel 7:25 as "a time (1 year) and times (2 years) and the dividing of time" (one-half year). Three and one-half years. It is the "time and times and half a time" mentioned in Revelation 12:14. It is the 42 months of Revelation 11:2. It is the "a thousand two hundred and three score days" (1,260 days) of Revelation 11:3. Three and one-half years, 42 months, and 1,260 days are the same.

The great tribulation thus will begin at least three and one-half years after the rapture of the saints. Before the great tribulation will be the "beginning of sorrows" mentioned by the Saviour in Matthew 24:8.

In the book of Revelation things proceed largely in chronological order. The church age is discussed in chapters 2 and 3, and we suppose there will be no churches on the earth after the period of time described in Revelation, chapter 3. There will be Christians on the earth later, of course, but so far as we know no churches.

The rapture is pictured in Revelation 4:1, 2, which says:

"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.

"2. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne."

When you compare this with the story of the rapture in First Thessalonians 4:16, 17, you will see that it must refer to the same event.

"16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

But while the rapture of the saints is pictured in Revelation 4:1, 2, the "beast" or "man of sin," who will bring on the great tribulation, is not mentioned in Revelation until chapter 6:2 and not presented fully as a world dictator until chapter 13, especially verses 7, 8.

There are many signs that the world is getting ready for a wicked, Godless dictator who will rule the world from Rome and will hate Jews and Christians, but, thank God, we know he cannot appear until Christ first calls away his saints. And that may occur at any moment. "Watch ye therefore for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man cometh."

plan of salvation by faith, saying:

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

Every prophet in the Old Testament, said Peter, preached salvation by faith. There has never been another plan.

Hebrews, chapter 11, gives a long list from Abel on down who were saved by faith. Nobody was ever saved by the Ten Commandments, nobody was ever saved by animal sacrifices or keeping any part of the Mosaic law.

II. Repentance and Faith Are Inseparable Parts of the Same Thing

Repentance is inseparable from faith. The Greek word for repentance in the Bible simply means a change of mind; that is, a wholesale change of attitude towards sin and toward God. One who turns his heart to trust in Christ has, naturally, turned his heart away from the love of sin. How could one love the Lord Jesus and long to please Him without turning in his heart away from sin, or, in other words, repenting from sin? Repentance is not sorrow alone, though the Scripture says that "Godly sorrow worketh repentance" (II Cor. 7:10). One who is really sorry for his sin, sorry with a Godly sorrow, will repent; that is, will turn his heart to trust Christ and love God.

It is a mistake to make a process out of salvation with repentance and faith as separate steps. They are really different parts of the same step or different ways of speaking of the same attitude of heart. One who repents, that is, has turned from rebellion and unbelief to trust Christ has believed, of course. One who trusts in Christ has necessarily turned his heart from rebellion and rejection of Christ and so has repented.

III. The Bible Clearly Commands All To Repent

But there are several clear statements that all who are ever saved must repent—that repentance is necessary to salvation. Jesus said, in Luke 24:47, "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Repentance is then for all nations and that is included in the gospel to be preached to all the world, according to the Great Commission.

Paul preached the same thing at Athens among the Gentiles. In Acts 17:30, he said, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

God commands all men everywhere to repent, and no one can ever be saved without repentance.

IV. Ultradispensationalism Does Great Harm

Dispensational teaching is greatly overdone these days. The Scofield Bible goes too far in that direction though it is the best reference Bible in the world and one I have long used. It has become popular with some "smart Alec" Bible teachers and hair-splitting theologians to chop the Bible up dispensationally until not much is left in their opinion, for a New Testament Christian. This is foolish and hurtful. Some say baptism is not for this age. Some say the Lord's Supper is out of date and only for Jews. Others say that the Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's Prayer are law, not grace and not for us. Some people speak very wisely, in their own opinion, about the "transitional period" in the book of Acts, though the Bible never mentions it. Some people say the gifts of the Spirit are not for these days, that miracles are no more. Some make great distinctions between John's baptism and Christian baptism, though the Bible makes none, and though that baptism was all that Christ had or any of the apostles.

Certain ceremonial laws were for Jews and not for us. They had circumcision, they had animal sacrifices and other ceremonies of the tabernacle and temple they observed strictly, the seventh day Sabbath, and the seventh year Sabbath. They had a special Levitical priesthood, they were given restrictions on diet. These were ceremonial laws and the New Testament expressly mentions that each

Bible Questions Answered

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO)

Question 2: "Did Jesus intend the breaking of bread at the last supper to establish the communion service?"

Answer: Yes, He did intend to establish the Communion Service, the Lord's Supper, as a regular ceremony in the churches. I think that is made clear in the Scriptures in the following ways:

1. Reading the account of the pre-passover meal, and of the institution of the Lord's supper, in Luke 22:14-20, it is noticeable that there came a regular meal first. Verse 20 says, "Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." In verse 17 above He had already passed the cup to the disciples for their supper. Then after the supper, He gave a ceremonial meal, a lasting and permanent symbol. Although following a regular meal, the Lord's Supper was a ceremonial, typical meal in which there was separate thanksgiving, separate breaking of bread, and a separate passing of the cup.

2. The Lord expressly said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). The disciples would naturally understand, at this passover season, that the Passover was an old testament, or covenant, picturing the death of Christ. For 1,500 years Jews had been eating a lamb without blemish, roasted with fire, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. They remembered the blood on the door posts; and everything about the passover supper pictured the Lord Jesus. But now Jesus says instead of that old covenant, or testament, He is giving them a new witness, a new symbol, a new covenant picturing His death on the cross. So instead of the passover supper of the Jews, since the death of Christ New Testament Christians have the Lord's Supper. It is simply a memorial, showing forth the Lord's death. The passover supper did not save, and so this Lord's Supper, or Communion Supper, does not save. It is a memorial, a way of preaching the gospel.

3. A third proof, and one that cannot be disputed, that the Lord Jesus intended the Lord's Supper, or Communion, as a frequent part of Christian worship down through the ages, is that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to give particular instruction concerning it. In First Corinthians 11, verses 17 to 34, the Lord, through Paul, gives specific instructions on how to eat the Lord's Supper, saying particularly, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (verse 26). The Epistles in the New Testament are exactly as inspired as the Gospels, all of them the very Word of God. We know that the Lord Jesus, who had Paul write that discussion and description concerning the Lord's Supper, was Himself the Author of the ceremony.

4. The fourth, an unassailable evidence that Jesus intended to establish the Communion Service for New Testament churches, is that that is the way all of the apostles understood it, and they set out from the very first to follow this teaching of Jesus. Nobody can dispute that the Lord's Supper, or the Communion Service, has been a part of worship since the very days of Pentecost and that the custom was established under the direction of the Spirit-filled and Christ-taught apostles.

I thank you for your letter and your questions, and I pray that God will give you many blessings through the study of His Word. I covet your prayers.

In the Saviour's name, yours,
John R. Rice

one of these ceremonial laws is done away with in Christ and that New Testament Christians are not to observe them. See Colossians 2:14-17.

But on the great fundamental matters God never changes and His way with men does not vary. In all ages men are saved the same way and men will never be saved any other way except by repentance and faith. God answers prayer the same in all ages. He empowers people with the Holy Spirit for His service in all ages.